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## **CARDIN CALLS PRESIDENT OBAMA'S SPEECH TO JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS HONEST AND DIRECT**

*Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), released the following statement in response to President Obama's first speech to a Joint Session of Congress. Senator Cardin is a member of the Senate Committees on Budget, Foreign Relations, Judiciary, Environment and Public Works, and Small Business & Entrepreneurship. He also serves as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (also known as the U.S. Helsinki Commission).*

"President Obama was honest with the American people tonight. It was refreshing to hear a president talk straight to the American public about the seriousness of our economic problems and what we need to do to get our economy back on track.

"I agree with President Obama that we will all need to make sacrifices as we try to end this recession. The president inherited a large deficit and an economy that already was sliding. While we haven't stopped the hemorrhaging yet, like an overwhelming majority of Americans, I am confident that President Obama is leading us in the right direction toward a recovery. It will be difficult and it will take time but we will succeed.

"I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Congress to give President Obama the tools he needs. He clearly understands how essential it is to fix the basic underpinnings of our economy, while we work to create jobs, ease the credit crunch, and stem our housing crisis. I am encouraged by his plans to address healthcare, energy independence, education, and infrastructure, while also slashing our deficit and paying for new programs without adding to the bill we leave our children and grandchildren.

"Like President Obama, I am optimistic for the future. Through the right combination of investments, reforms, fiscal discipline and faith to the values that have made our nation great, we will restore America's leadership position in the world and grow our economy for generations to come."

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